

United States Senate

May 3, 2023

Mr. Perico Montaner
President and Chief Executive Officer
Medieval Times
5020 Riverside Dr, Bldg 3
Irving, TX 75039

Ms. Julie Muenzler
Vice President for Human Resources
Medieval Times
5020 Riverside Dr, Bldg 3
Irving, TX 75039

Dear Mr. Montaner and Ms. Muenzler:

We write in support of the hundreds of knights, squires, showcast actors, and stable hands employed by Medieval Times Entertainment, Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament, Medieval Knights, LLC, Medieval Times USA, Inc., and all other subsidiaries (which we will collectively refer to as “Medieval Times” and “your company”). We write to urge you to cease all future union busting activities, including contracting with union busting “persuader” consultants, and also strongly request that you negotiate in good faith with workers at the Lyndhurst and Buena Park castles in accordance with the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to form a first collective bargaining agreement.

As you are aware, despite your company’s extreme union busting attempts,¹ our constituents at the castle in Lyndhurst, NJ voted to form the first union at your company in July 2022.² Shortly thereafter, show performers and stable hands at the Buena Park, CA, castle voted to unionize.³ And, just last week, sound and lighting technicians in Buena Park voted unanimously to be represented by IATSE Local 504.⁴

Our constituents cite a variety of health, safety, and wage concerns as the reason they chose to file a union petition. As you know, these jobs can be extremely dangerous, with frequent jousting and horseback riding, horse care, stage combat, and stunts. Many workers report that your management's lack of communication and organization has led to insufficient and impractical training in order to be properly prepared for shows. Many also report that little is done to control unruly guests, which not only puts horses and their riders in danger, but also the speaking actors that interact closely with them. Additionally, the workers request more regular schedules and pay to reflect the skill of their positions. Our constituents have communicated that they have been told on multiple occasions that they are not worth better wages, as they are "not Broadway" or "not Hollywood"⁵ all while performing 5 – 12 shows per week in a theater that seats 1,400 patrons.

¹ https://www.huffpost.com/entry/medieval-times-canadian-knights_n_6408d3aee4b0bbbc6b30dc85

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/15/arts/medieval-times-union.html>

³ <https://www.latimes.com/business/story/2022-11-10/medieval-times-workers-in-buena-park-vote-27-18-to-unionize>

⁴ <https://www.nlrb.gov/case/21-RC-315024>

⁵ <https://inthesetimes.com/article/medieval-times-union-strike>

In light of the dangerous and demanding nature of these jobs, it is particularly alarming that your company has spent large sums of money on efforts to dissuade workers from raising their collective voice. According to Department of Labor records, your company spent \$3,200 per day, plus expenses, on an anti-union consultant to dissuade workers from joining a union.⁶ As has been widely reported, prior to NLRB election at the New Jersey castle, the company subjected employees to captive audience meetings⁷ designed to dissuade workers from joining the union. As you may be aware, NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo issued a memorandum in April 2022 saying that she will ask the NLRB Board to reexamine its posture on captive audience meetings, which she believes to be inconsistent with the NLRA's protection of employees' free choice.⁸

Additionally, as you are also surely aware, NLRB Regional Offices have 11 open ULP charges filed against Medieval Times U.S.A. Inc. or Medieval Knights, LLC, including six in New Jersey⁹ and four in California.¹⁰

These captive audience meetings, expenditures on anti-union consultants, and potential NLRA violations are even more disturbing given the company's track record of receiving millions of dollars in taxpayer funds. Indeed, three of your company's locations received a total of nearly \$21 million in taxpayer money through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant (SVOG) program, which was created by the Consolidated Appropriations Act passed in 2020 and expanded under the American Rescue Plan Act passed in 2021.¹¹ As a reminder, this program, created by Congress during the height of the pandemic, was meant to be used to prevent companies from going out of business and workers from losing their livelihoods. It is unfortunate to see your company spend company funds mere months after receiving millions in taxpayer dollars on union busting. Rather, Medieval Times should be using these funds to support its workforce and engage in good faith negotiations with the unionized employees.

While your show may be set in Medieval Spain in the 11th century, these workers are living in the United States of America in the 21st Century, more than 85 years after the NLRA became the law of the land. These employees are crucial to your operation and deserving of dignity and respect. They do not deserve to toil in substandard conditions with medieval wages. We no longer live in a time where your company can use government funding to squash peasant revolts. In the year 2023, we are alarmed that your company has spent thousands of dollars per day

⁶ <https://olmsapps.dol.gov/query/orgReport.do?rptId=823343&rptForm=LM20Form>

⁷ https://www.huffpost.com/entry/medieval-times-workers-first-union_n_62bb1d29e4b0d26a9b14fa17

⁸ <https://www.nlr.gov/news-outreach/news-story/nlr-general-counsel-jennifer-abruzzo-issues-memo-on-captive-audience-and>

⁹ <https://www.nlr.gov/case/22-CA-301865>, <https://www.nlr.gov/case/21-CA-304892>,
<https://www.nlr.gov/case/22-CA-305612>, <https://www.nlr.gov/case/22-CA-305615>,
<https://www.nlr.gov/case/13-CA-310477>, <https://www.nlr.gov/case/21-CA-311421>,
<https://www.nlr.gov/case/22-CA-311585>, <https://www.nlr.gov/case/22-CA-312517>,
<https://www.nlr.gov/case/22-CA-313891>, <https://www.nlr.gov/case/21-CA-313931>

¹⁰ <https://www.nlr.gov/case/21-CA-304892>, <https://www.nlr.gov/case/21-CA-311421>,
<https://www.nlr.gov/case/21-CA-313931>

¹¹ <https://data.sba.gov/dataset/4ad86088-4c7b-4525-9562-ecd9488916c9/resource/e99e8853-d322-4533-9231-a52b149d7444/download/awards-as-of-7-5-22.xlsx>

engaging in union busting mere months after receiving taxpayer funding from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 and the American Rescue Plan Act.

As such, we write to request a response within 30 calendar days as to your plans to negotiate *in good faith* to form a first collective bargaining contract with the unionized castle workers in New Jersey and California. We also request a written response committing to halt all retaliation and future union busting efforts with these and all other employees.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator